<u>B. Claims</u>

Please cancel claims 2-6 and 13-17 without prejudice and amend claims 1 and 12 as follows. A complete listing of all the claims appears below; this listing replaces all earlier amendments and listings of the claims.

1. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus that performs image processing for generating image data to be used for printing by means of printing means, said apparatus comprising;

retaining means for retaining density correction data for each of a plurality of printing conditions between which density appears differently in the printing by means of the printing means, the printing conditions being conditions according to which the printing means performs printing and being previously determined;

judging means for judging as to which printing condition the printing means should perform printing according to, <u>based on image data to be printed,</u> when performing image processing; and

density correction means for performing density correction on the image data using the density correction data corresponding to the printing condition judged by said judging means, among the density correction data retained by said retaining means<u>,</u>

<u>wherein the printing means can form dots having different sizes and the printing conditions are printing conditions based on dot size, which is formed in printing performed by the printing means in accordance with the image data.</u>

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously Presented) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the printing means has a plurality of printing elements and the density correction data retained by said retaining means is retained for each of the plurality of printing elements in said printing means.

8. (Previously Presented) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the printing means has a plurality of printing elements and the density correction data retained by said retaining means is retained for each of rasters of the image data, each of the rasters respectively corresponding to a predetermined number of printing elements among the plurality of printing elements in said printing means.

9. (Previously Presented) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the printing means ejects ink to perform printing.

10. (Previously Presented) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein the printing means ejects ink using thermal energy.

11. (Previously Presented) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said judging means judges the printing condition by simulating printing by said printing means.

12. (Currently Amended) An image processing method that performs image processing for generating image data to be used for printing by means of printing means, said method comprising the steps of:

preparing density correction data for each of a plurality of printing conditions between which density appears differently in the printing by means of the printing means, the printing conditions being conditions according to which the printing means performed printing and being previously determined;

judging which printing condition the printing means should perform printing according to, based on image data to be printed, when performing image processing; and

performing density correction on the image data using the density correction data corresponding to the printing condition judged in said judging step, among the density correction data prepared in said preparing step,

wherein the printing means can form dots having different sizes and the printing conditions are printing conditions based on dot size, which is formed in printing performed by the printing means in accordance with the image data.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Canceled)

15. (Canceled)

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented) The image processing method as claimed in claim 12, wherein the printing means has a plurality of printing elements and the density correction data prepared in said preparing step is prepared for each of the plurality of printing elements in the printing means.

19. (Previously Presented) The image processing method as claimed in claim 12, wherein the printing means has a plurality of printing elements and the density correction data prepared in said preparing step is prepared for each of rasters of the image data, each of the rasters respectively corresponding to a predetermined number of printing elements among the plurality of printing elements in the printing means.

20. (Previously Presented) The image processing method as claimed in claim 12, wherein the printing means ejects ink to perform printing.

21. (Previously Presented) The image processing method as claimed in claim 20, wherein the printing means ejects ink using thermal energy.

22. (Previously Presented) The image processing method as claimed in claim 12, wherein said judging step judges the printing condition by simulating printing by the printing means.